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Resale of power at below market rate benefits ratepayers and provides full pay plus Christmas bonus for workers

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Bonneville Power Administration

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CONTACTS: [Ed Mosey](#), BPA (503) 230-5359 or
[Mike Hansen](#), BPA (503) 230-4328

PORTLAND, Ore. – Thanks to an agreement reached between the Bonneville Power Administration and Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation and union representatives, laid off steelworkers from Kaiser's Mead, Wash., plant will receive full pay and benefits for the December and January period plus a \$1,000 Christmas bonus. The agreement allows BPA to buy back power it sold Kaiser under a 1996 contract.

This transaction will save Northwest ratepayers up to \$25 million compared to current market prices.

"It is only fair that Kaiser and other Northwest aluminum producers share with its workers the financial gains realized by remarketing cost-based federal power in today's market," said Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson. "We're glad these workers will receive full pay and benefits and a nice Christmas bonus."

Full pay for December through January plus a \$1,000 Christmas bonus will go to 130 workers laid off in late November as well as the additional 400 workers laid off when Kaiser decided to completely shut down its Mead, Wash., plant early this week. Steelworkers laid off earlier from Kaiser's Tacoma plant will also receive the \$1,000 bonus.

"Today's agreement made possible by the resale of power to BPA is a down payment to workers, their families and Northwest ratepayers," said BPA Acting Administrator Steve Wright. "This is an important first step leading to future agreements on how Kaiser will share the benefits of reselling low-cost federal power in today's market."

"We know this agreement will help make for a happier holiday season for workers at the Mead plant and their families," said David Foster, Director of District 11 of the United Steelworkers of America. "We believe the agreement will support the long-term viability of the aluminum industry in the Northwest."

"This agreement is an important first step towards sharing the benefits of the resale of federal power with the region. We believe an agreement can be reached where Kaiser, its employees and the entire Pacific Northwest can benefit," Wright said.

Besides being a good deal for Northwest ratepayers in today's volatile energy market, reselling the

power to BPA will help to provide energy needed to serve other consumers in a period when the region is energy deficient.

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